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Protectors of the Land and Water: Environmentalism in Wisconsin, 1961-1968

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climate of the time. He underscores Truman's oft-overlooked role in managing the Marshall Plan. By appointing Marshall, whom he considered the greatest man of his time, secretary of state, he ensured the plan's acceptance.

Similarly, Truman exercised a forceful hand in Korea to avoid a League of Nations-type failure. Ferrell uses newly released Soviet documents to clarify the Soviet role in the war's beginning. Yet the author feels Truman stumbled when he did not declare war and when he gave MacArthur permission to invade the North. Things then started to unravel as, according to General Ridgeway, MacArthur inexpertly deployed troops "like Custer" (325). The firing of General MacArthur, whom the president had referred to as "Mr. Prima Donna, Brass Hat, Five Star," was "not on the same scale" (330) as a policy mistake, yet it won Truman history's lowest public approval rating.

Ferrell's work could have benefitted from deeper congressional analysis of the failure of the Fair Deal; the challenges here are not presented as forcibly as those in foreign policy. While the author makes it clear that later successes in areas such as civil rights were largely due to Truman's initiative and vision in the 1940s, one must observe that if Truman's work with civil rights led to success, his concern for civil liberties did not. If his handling of railroad workers was adroit, that of steelworkers was not. If his support for Israeli independence was positive, his obfuscations with the RFC were not. Scandals, many of which seem minor today, and the odiferous presence of McCarthyism exacerbated these concerns. In the final evaluation, however, Truman's success with domestic policy lay in its future influence, just as his foreign policy set future standards.

Inevitably, Ferrell's *Harry Truman* will be compared with David McCullough's lengthy and successful popular history, *Truman*. At four hundred pages of text, Ferrell's book runs not much over one-third the length of McCullough's tome. There are times when succinct historical analysis is to be applauded by the reader. Such is the case with Ferrell's biography of the prairie president who has consistently been ranked among the handful of "near great" executives in this nation's history.

Protectors of the Land and Water: Environmentalism in Wisconsin, 1961-1968, by Thomas R. Huffman. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994. ix, 252 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY SAMUEL P. HAYS, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Most history of post-World War II environmental affairs has been written in national terms. Yet even a cursory reading of the record makes clear that interest in such matters varied from state to state and

region to region. Some regions developed a stronger environmental culture than others and hence experienced stronger political drives for advances in environmental policy. Given this observation, Thomas Huffman's book on Wisconsin is most welcome. Among the varied regional environmental cultures, citizens in the Great Lakes states (along with New England, New York, New Jersey, Florida, and the West Coast) registered significant concerns. By digging deeper into one state's history, Huffman has worked out the roots of environmental culture in a most helpful way. More states need similar attention, and Huffman's is a good model to follow.

Huffman examines several broad issues—outdoor recreation, water pollution, and DDT—to detail the way emerging environmental values shaped the growing political debate. Much of his analysis is organized around the political rivalry between the governors, Democrat Gaylord Nelson and Republican Warren Knowles, disputes over the respective roles of state or federal governments, and party rivalry in the state legislature. But in Huffman's account, one is always drawn back to the underlying changes in values and culture from which the debate over public policies arose and in which it was nurtured.

The sequence of issues in Wisconsin is similar to that in the nation at large. First, debate centered on the issue of outdoor recreation (in this case in the Wisconsin North Woods) and the protection of recreational rivers. Public attention then turned to water pollution, especially from pulp and paper mills; this issue extended the range of public interest to the state as a whole. Still another phase introduced the public to the role of toxics in the classic Wisconsin DDT proceedings of 1968–69, an event that ranks with *Silent Spring* in making DDT a household word. Each issue, in sequence, built upon the previous one to shape an increasingly elaborate and far-reaching environmental perspective of interrelated values, ideas, and policies.

Huffman also analyzes Wisconsin's pulp and paper industry, one of the first nationally to organize in opposition to emerging environmental objectives. Pulp and paper companies continued to oppose both outdoor recreation and water quality programs, objecting to the place of these issues in both party and administrative politics. Wisconsin was one of the first states, therefore, in which one might observe the contest between environmental initiatives and the industrial opposition.

As Huffman delineates changes in environmental values, he helps readers think about still another overarching state environmental issue of the 1960s: how should such programs be administered? Many states chose to administer conservation/recreation issues and pollution/"environmental protection" issues separately. Wisconsin, however, was one of a number of states that developed "mega" departments for the

joint administration of related environmental issues. Huffman's work helps to establish connections between the form the agencies adopted and the underlying pattern of environmental culture.

A state environmental history like this raises the problem of the limited nature of documentary sources at the state level. Huffman makes excellent use of the usual public documents, such as newspapers, administrative records, and the private papers of political leaders. If historians wish to give more attention to state environmental affairs, however, they should also be more vigilant in the task of gathering and preserving evidence when events occur. Among at-risk records are judicial and municipal records, as well as those of citizen organizations, the regulated industries, and academic scientists.

One case illustrates this point. Wisconsin politicians and the public slowly moved from understanding water quality as a health issue to focusing on in-stream issues. This shift involved a complex set of factors ranging from judicial to scientific; as public values and relationships between state and local governments changed, so did the way in which people thought about streams. If we are to get at the roots of why this transition occurred, we need to know more than whether the crucial point of measurement was bacteria related to human health or oxygen related to fish survival. If we are to get at the roots of such issues, we need to be more vigilant about preserving sources as they are produced.

Protectors of the Land and Water is a major contribution. It also serves as a beginning point to think more seriously about the task of exploring state affairs as a crucial new direction in environmental history.

River of Peril, River of Promise: The Politics of Managing the Missouri River, by John E. Thorson. Development of Western Resources Series. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994. xiv, 282 pages. Illustrations, graphs, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY JOHN O. ANFINSON, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Like bookends, the upper Mississippi and Missouri rivers bracket Iowa. Both rivers elicit serious battles over their management. On the upper Mississippi, biologists warn that the river's ecosystems are collapsing due to its management for navigation. Navigation interests, meanwhile, are pushing to expand some locks and dams to allow for more shipping. On the Missouri River, the debate has been between states of the upper and lower basin.

States along the Missouri River basin are sharply divided, according to John E. Thorson, in *River of Promise, River of Peril*, between the haves and the have nots. Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, and Kansas

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